

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 07**  
**INCIDENT NO. 97-001**  
**DATE: June 24, 1997      TIME: 8:00 a.m.**

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Flood - Devils Lake.
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGE: An updated forecast, released June 18 by the National Weather Service, calls for Devils Lake to reach 1,442.5 to 1,443 feet, one-half to one foot lower than predicted in the forecast issued on June 4. The rise of Devils Lake has slowed significantly as a result of warmer temperatures, increased evaporation and limited precipitation. Normal precipitation for June in the Devils Lake area averages 3.35 inches. However, from June 1 to June 17, only 0.52 inches of rain had been reported.

The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay was 1,442.18 feet MSL on June 23. The N.D. State Water Commission reports that the lake has been holding steady around 1,442.20 for approximately two weeks and may be near its peak for 1997, if current dry weather conditions continue.

During a June 5 aerial surveillance of Devils Lake, health unit staff counted 12 houses, 14 trailers, and 14 granaries, shops, garages and storage buildings that are surrounded by lake waters. Wolf Point Subdivision in Benson County, as well as several farmsteads, are isolated by flood waters.

In Benson County, high winds on Devils Lake occasionally wash debris and water onto Woods-Rutten Road, making travel hazardous. Heavy traffic on the road has caused a severe dust problem and hazardous driving conditions. More than 2,000 cars a day travel the nine-mile gravel road compared to 199 cars a day five years ago.

Dust problems and road damages have also been reported along the Kraft Corral and Military Roads, two Ramsey County gravel roads being used by motorists to avoid construction work on N.D. Highway 20 near Camp Grafton.

Because of the numerous road construction projects underway, truck traffic has been heavy on all area highways. The N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) has reported that flagging operations at each project area have created significant travel delays. Motorists should see a decrease in such delays once grade raise and road widths have been completed.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: No change from previous reports.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: A State Flood Coordination Center meeting was held in Devils Lake, June 19, 1997.

Following is a summary of information reported during that meeting.

### **N.D. State Water Commission**

The N.D. State Water Commission (SWC) continues its efforts to secure storage sites for Devils Lake water through its Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP). To date, agreements have been reached on 90 new sites capable of holding approximately 10,000 acre feet (AF) of water. With these additional sites, the program now has 156 sites where 19,000 AF of water is being stored. The SWC is also working to secure agreements for 10 additional sites that will hold an additional 3,000 AF. Through ASAP, the SWC has prevented 30,000 AF of water from reaching Devils Lake during the past two years. Based on the lake's current level, ASAP has prevented the lake from rising four inches.

The SWC has issued three orders to private landowners to remove their structural debris from Devils Lake. The SWC is working with the Lake Region District Health Unit to identify other problem areas.

Work is underway to identify possible illegal drains in the eight-county Devils Lake Basin. County water resource boards will be notified if illegal drains are identified in their county.

### **N.D. Insurance Department**

During May, more than 10,000 flood insurance policies were sold throughout North Dakota, including the Devils Lake Basin, according to the State Floodplain Manager.

### **Lake Region District Health Unit**

As the level of Devils Lake remains steady at its current level, the necessity to burn structures has decreased, according to Lake Region District Health Unit officials. To date, 14 structures have been burned, including homes, mobile homes, shops, and garages. These structures were located throughout Benson and Ramsey Counties, including Six Mile Bay, Stromme Subdivision, Creel Bay, Wolf Point, Eastview Estates and Horseshoe Bend Estates.

The health unit has issued 44 onsite sewer permits to homeowners who lost service after Ramsey County Rural Utility System closed lift stations inundated by Devils Lake flood waters. Staff members are working on additional permits for residents in the Wolford Subdivision, who lost service earlier this month after their lift station was flooded.

### **N.D. Department of Transportation**

The recent dry period has helped contractors achieve substantial progress in efforts to elevate state highways in the Devils Lake Basin.

Highways where grade raises are underway include U.S. Highway 281 and N.D. Highways 19, 20 and 57. Elevations of driving surfaces will be as follows:

U.S. Highway 281, north and south of Minnewaukan:	1,451 feet
N.D. Highway 19, at its junction with U.S. Highway 281:	1,451 feet
N.D. Highways 19, 20 and 57:	1,448.5 feet

Officials for the N.D. DOT are investigating funding options available from the Federal Highway Administration for either a grade raise or a bridge crossing at N.D. Highway 57 at the Narrows crossing. Plans for the bridge option call for constructing a bridge to 1,460 feet MSL.

In July, the N.D. DOT will let two grade raise projects for low-lying areas along N.D. Highway 19, east and west of Mauvais Coulee. The sites will be elevated to 1,448.5 feet.

Construction workers are in the final stages of a grade raise project along N.D. Highway 1 at Stump Lake. The road has been elevated to 1,410 feet MSL; the lake is at 1,406.35 feet.

N.D. DOT staff is developing plans to repair damaged areas and to place gravel on Kraft Corral and Military Roads. National Guard crews are applying water to the Woods-Rutten Road in an effort to reduce dust

problems. The N.D. DOT plans to supply the National Guard a chemical that will provide greater dust abatement for a longer period of time.

The N.D. DOT is developing plans to repair culverts damaged by the 1997 spring runoff. Repairs to these sites, which are located throughout the district, will take place in the fall.

### **N.D. Parks and Recreation Department**

Because of flood waters, Grahams Island State Park will remain closed for the summer. Two park employees are among six families, who have evacuated from their homes and have moved to Shelters Grove, Minnewaukan or Devils Lake.

### **N.D. Game and Fish Department**

N.D. Game and Fish Department employees are working to obtain a lease and access easement for a boat ramp from a Six Mile Bay landowner. The proposed boat ramp will be located on the west end of Six Mile Bay. Once an agreement has been finalized, a contractor will be secured to perform site work. Once completed, Devils Lake will have five public boat access sites.

### **Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Indian Health Service (IHS) has awarded a contract to install riprap at St. Michael's sewage lagoon. The lagoon would be protected to 1,450 feet. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has provided \$225,000 for the project.

IHS employees are assisting Spirit Lake Nation officials to determine which septic tanks and drain fields will be replaced. The tanks and fields will be replaced through IHS assistance.

IHS has provided a sanitarian to assist the Spirit Lake Nation sanitarian with flood-related concerns, as well as other public health concerns.

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has eight projects underway in the Devils Lake Basin. Updates on the projects are as follows:

1. Stage One, City of Devils Lake Levee Raise: Stage One efforts to elevate the lake level protection system for the city of Devils Lake are 70 percent complete. The levee is being constructed to 1,445 feet with five feet of freeboard. The disaster supplemental bill recently passed by the U.S. Congress allows for the levee to be constructed to 1,450 with up to seven feet of free board.
2. Stage Two, City of Devils Lake Levee Raise: Redesign work continues on this phase of the project, which borders southern and eastern portions of Devils Lake.
3. Stromme Road, east and west of N.D. Highway 57: Crews have completed construction of emergency levees on Stromme Road. The levees were built to 1,446 feet MSL to include erosion protection.
4. Devils Lake East End Levee: Construction crews have reached the midway point on construction of an emergency levee that extends east from the city of Devils Lake's storm retention ponds.
5. Devils Lake East Ditch: Construction crews are nearing completion of work to plug the East Ditch. Lake water had backed up to 14th Street, threatening nearby homes and city lift stations.
6. Ramsey County Rural Utility System: The USACE will evaluate a manhole in the Eagle Bend area threatened by flood waters. Approximately 300 homes would be without sewer system if the manhole becomes inundated.
7. Spirit Lake Tribe: The USACE continues to assist Spirit Lake Tribe with evaluation of flood-protection measures, including road raises and levee construction.

8. Creel Bay Realignment: USACE and Ramsey County officials will meet to discuss a possible realignment of the lake level protection system for Devils Lake. County officials have requested the USACE to consider a realignment, which would protect 200 Eagle Bend Estates homes, telephone, sewage and water systems, Ramsey County Road #1 and a golf course.

### **Benson County Emergency Management**

County officials will let a bid on June 25 to elevate Grahams Island's access road from its present elevation of 1,440 feet to 1,445 feet.

### **Ramsey County Emergency Management**

Ramsey County road crews are working to elevate Lakewood Road to 1,460 feet. The project is estimated to cost \$2.3 million.

To date, 92 structures have been moved and owners of 20 others plan to relocate from the Devils Lake floodplain. Ten homes have been destroyed, and another 10 have been burned.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The next State Flood Coordination Center meeting will be held July 10, 1997 at 1:30 p.m. at the Ramsey County Courthouse basement meeting room.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

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Douglas C. Friez, State Director